

Georgia Champion High School Journalist Award Guidelines

Co-sponsored by the Georgia Scholastic Press Association and the Journalism Education Association

The high school journalist of the year awards are given to the top student journalists in the country. The contest winners from each state competition are sent to the national level. Portfolios are judged at the spring national JEA/NSPA convention (which will be held in Nashville this year), and winners are announced at the convention's concluding awards ceremony. Scholarship funds named for Sister Rita Jeanne, JEA's longtime treasurer — \$5,000 for first place and \$2,000 for four runners-up — are released when a student enrolls in a college journalism program. Students entering the national contest must have an adviser who is a JEA member. The winner of the state award receives a \$100 prize and a plaque from GSPA and will be recognized at the May 1, 2009, Awards Ceremony.

Applicant Qualifications

- Must be a graduating senior.
- Have at least a 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale.
- Plan to study journalism in college and to pursue a journalism career.
- Have participated in high school journalism for at least two years.

Portfolio Checklist

The applicant must include the following in a portfolio:

- The official entry form (see page 10).
- A self-analytical evaluation of your “journalistic life,” using your most creative form.
- An action photo of you doing something “journalistic” — interviewing someone, taking a photograph, designing a page, doing a broadcast standup or talking to your staff. Winners' photos may be published.
- An official copy of your transcript.
- Three or four letters of recommendation from your adviser, other teachers who know your leadership and journalistic abilities, and practitioners with whom you have worked. A letter from the principal is desirable, but not absolutely necessary.
- Samples of your work selected to show your quality and diversity of reporting, writing, photography, design, etc.
- A self-addressed, padded, stamped envelope large enough to hold your portfolio if you want it returned.

Preparing Your Portfolio

- Entry material should not exceed 36 one-sided or 18 two-sided pages.
- Plastic sheet protectors are acceptable. All letters and transcripts should be opened and included as part of the 36 pages.
- The pages should be inserted into a ring notebook designed to hold 8-1/2-by-11-inch paper.
- *Some ideas to help you get started on the self-analytical evaluation:* How do you feel about journalism? How did you get started in journalism? What have you had to go through to achieve? What have you contributed to journalism? What are your journalism plans for the future? The evaluation should be long enough for the judges to reach a decision as to your creative qualifications and short enough not to be redundant.
- Samples of work should be carefully selected. Provide judges with a good cross section of your best work rather than everything ever produced. Date, name of publication and relevance should be on the page with each sample.
- Include samples showing one or more of the following characteristics. They should be grouped according to what they represent and these groupings should be labeled:
 1. **Skilled and creative use of media content** — writing, production, photography, etc.
 2. **Inquiring mind and investigative persistence** resulting in in-depth study or studies of issues important to the local high school audience, high school students in general, or society.
 3. **Courageous and responsible handling of sensitive issues** — local or societal — despite threat or imposition of censorship.
 4. **Variety of journalistic experiences**, each handled in a quality manner — newspaper, yearbook, broadcast, etc.
 5. **Sustained and commendable work with community media.**
- At least one issue of your newspaper or magazine or photocopies of relevant spreads from your yearbook (not the entire book) should be enclosed so the judges can see the context of your work. Audio and/or video tapes should accompany an entry that focuses on broadcast work. They should be cued up to the work the judges should view or hear, and should have the entrant's name on the tape case.
- Photocopies of letters, clippings and art are acceptable; however, original prints of photographs should accompany entries based on published pictures.
- A self-addressed, padded envelope large enough to hold the entry and bearing enough postage to cover the cost of mailing should be included if the entry is to be returned. GSPA/JEA is not responsible for portfolios not accompanied by return envelopes nor for portfolios lost in transit whether by person or by mail.

Deadlines

Mail your entire portfolio package to: GSPA, Journalist of the Year Award, Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, 120 Hooper Street, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-3018. Entries must be **postmarked by Friday, Feb. 13, 2009.**

Do not mail your entry to JEA.

GEORGIA CHAMPION HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALIST/ JEA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

PLEASE TYPE

Name _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone (_____) _____ E-mail _____

Parent (s)/Guardian (s) Names _____

School _____

School Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone (_____) _____ E-mail _____

Adviser _____ Phone (_____) _____

1. Hometown Media _____ 2. _____

Street Address _____ / _____

City, State, ZIP _____ / _____

How long have you been involved in journalism? 1 year 2 years 3 years 4 years More than 4 years

Positions Held (specify type of media such as yearbook, newspaper, literary magazine, radio, TV):

Publication Name/Type	Position	Length of Time
_____	_____	From _____ To _____
_____	_____	From _____ To _____
_____	_____	From _____ To _____
_____	_____	From _____ To _____
_____	_____	From _____ To _____

Has any of your work been cited by the media? If so, when and what award? Use a separate sheet to explain.

Do you plan to enroll this year in a university journalism degree program? Yes No

What aspect of journalism and mass communication is your career goal?

List colleges you are considering in order of preference. If you have definitely decided which school you will attend, list only that college.

College	Accepted	Definitely Will Attend
1. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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